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BEFORE THE WEST VIRGINIA STATE BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

IN RE: GRANT COURTNEY, P.E. **C2019-03**

CONSENT ORDER

Comes now the West Virginia State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers by Bhajan S. Saluja, P.E., its President, (hereinafter "the Board") for the purpose of agreeing to resolve a Complaint seeking disciplinary action against Grant Courtney, P.E. (hereinafter "Respondent Firm"). As reflected in this document, the parties have reached an agreement concerning the proper disposition of this matter, and the Board, upon approval of this agreement, does hereby **FIND** the following:

1. The matters set forth herein are within the jurisdiction of the Board, which is the state entity with the power and duty to regulate the practice of engineering in the State of West Virginia.
2. Respondent Firm holds COA # C05846, and does business as a sole proprietorship with no employees, and is organized under the laws of the State of Texas, with its principal place of business in Rowlett, Texas.
3. Sole proprietorships are required to have a Certification of Authorization (COA) to offer engineering services or practice engineering in West Virginia, and Respondent Firm did not apply for same until after the matters giving rise to this Complaint.
4. The Respondent Firm prepared structural drawings dated April 30, 2018 for a restaurant to be built in Cabell County, West Virginia, which action constitutes practicing engineering in West Virginia without a COA.
5. This resulted in a Board-initiated investigation, which disclosed that Respondent Firm had prepared engineering structural drawings for a West Virginia project without the required COA for an existing client of the Respondent Firm. In that an existing client

requested the engineering services, there was no offer of engineering services without the required COA made by the Respondent Firm.

6. The Respondent Firm filed an application for a COA, received by the Board on June 19, 2018, wherein it acknowledged under oath that it was currently providing engineering services for a project in West Virginia.

7. The Board initiated Complaint Number C2019-03 at its regular meeting on July 17, 2018, which was filed and served on July 23, 2018.

8. Respondent Firm admitted the allegations and initiated settlement negotiations in lieu of filing a response to the Complaint.

9. Respondent Firm admits that it provided engineering services in West Virginia to an existing client without a COA.

10. The Board has considered the following factors in reaching this settlement: Respondent Firm employed a licensed West Virginia Professional Engineer at the time the engineering work was done; the violations did not pose harm to the public; Respondent Firm applied for and received a COA and it was in good standing with the Board prior to the initiation of this Complaint; and Respondent Firm cooperated in the resolution of this Complaint.

11. The Board, in its discretion, will not assess administrative costs although it is within its power to assess such costs and administrative costs were incurred in the investigation, initiation and resolution of this complaint.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

12. The Board is the state entity with the power and duty to regulate the practice of engineering in the State of West Virginia, and matters related to such practice are within the jurisdiction of the Board. W. Va. Code § 30-13-1 *et seq.*

13. West Virginia engineering law allows a sole proprietor to practice or offer to practice engineering only upon the issuance of a certificate of authorization by the Board. W. Va.

Code § 30-13-17.

14. The Board may suspend or revoke or refuse to issue, restore or renew a certificate of registration, or place on probation, impose a civil penalty or reprimand any professional engineer who has failed to comply with any of the provisions of this article or any of the rules promulgated under it. W. Va. Code § 30-13-21(a)(4).

15. The provisions of W. Va. Code § 30-13-21(a) are applicable as appropriate to firms. W.Va. Code § 30-13-21(d).

16. The Board is authorized to "assess civil penalties against any person who violates any provision of this article or any rule promulgated by the board for each offense in an amount determined by the board." W. Va. Code § 30-13-21(b); see also W. Va. Code § 30-13-21(d)(4).

17. Practicing or offering to practice engineering, as defined by W. Va. § 30-13-3(e), without a valid Certificate of Authorization is an action that may subject a firm or sole proprietor to discipline by the Board, including a civil penalty up to Five Thousand Dollars ($5,000.00). W. Va. Code R. § 7-1-15.1.

18. In determining the amount of a civil penalty to be assessed, the Board may consider such factors as the circumstances leading to the violation; the nature and severity of the violation and the risk of harm to the public; the extent to which the cited person or firm has cooperated with the Board and the Board's investigation; and other matters as may be appropriate. W. Va. Code R. § 7-1-15.4.

19. The assessment of administrative costs is within the Board's sole discretion. W. Va. Code § 30-13-21(d)(4) and W. Va. Code R. § 7-1-14.4.

CONSENT OF RESPONDENT FIRM

Grant S. Courtney, as Owner of Grant Courtney, P.E., and on its behalf, by affixing his signature hereon, agrees to the following:

20. Respondent Firm is aware of its right to be represented by counsel and to pursue this matter through appropriate administrative and/or court procedures, including its right to a formal hearing before the Board, and Respondent Firm intelligently and voluntarily waives these rights provided the Board accepts the terms and conditions set forth in this Consent Order.

21. Respondent Firm admits it did not have a Certificate of Authorization at the time it practiced engineering in West Virginia, in violation of West Virginia engineering law.

22. Respondent Firm accepts the findings set forth above and consents to the entry of this Consent Order freely and voluntarily and not under duress, restraint or compulsion.

23. Respondent Firm acknowledges that this Consent Order is being executed for the purpose of avoiding further administrative action with respect to the above styled matter. In this regard, Respondent Firm authorizes the Board to review and examine investigative file materials concerning Respondent Firm's activities in West Virginia in consideration of this Consent Order.

24. Should the Board not approve this Consent Order, Respondent Firm waives any objections to the Board or any of its members participating in the adjudication of this matter. This paragraph is binding on Respondent Firm even if the Board does not approve this Consent Order.

25. Respondent Firm acknowledges that the Board may reject this proposal, notice and hold a hearing, and, upon adjudication, impose such sanctions of a disciplinary nature as it deems appropriate.

26. Respondent Firm understands that this Consent Order constitutes a full and final settlement of this matter, and nothing in this Consent Order or the circumstances giving rise to the same may be the subject of any appeal or other civil or administrative actions except an action by the Board to enforce the terms of this Consent Order, but that nothing in this Consent Order prohibits the Board from considering this disciplinary action or the

circumstances giving rise to same with regard to any future disciplinary matter involving Respondent Firm which may be before this Board.

27. Respondent Firm understands that the Complaint and this Consent Order are public records which, together with other public documents in the file, must be made available upon legal request in accordance with the State's Freedom of Information Act.

28. Respondent Firm agrees that the sum and substance of the Complaint and this agreement in part or in their entirety will be set forth in Board publications and on the Board's website, as well as other appropriate placements, including the non-public enforcement exchange database administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES).

29. Respondent Firm acknowledges that non-compliance with this Consent Order may result in the rescission of this agreement, the reinstatement of the Complaint, the summary revocation of any registration or certification issued to Respondent Firm by the Board, and the addition of any other charges which may arise or ensue from Respondent Firm's non-compliance with this Consent Order.

30. Respondent Firm acknowledges that proof of any material misstatement or misrepresentation made in connection with this matter will result in the rescission of this agreement, the reinstatement of the Complaint, the summary revocation of any registration or certification issued to Respondent Firm by the Board, and the addition of any other charges which may arise or ensue from providing false information to the Board in violation of West Virginia engineering law.

ORDER

1. On the basis of the foregoing, and upon entry of this Consent Order, the Board hereby **ORDERS** that this Consent Order shall serve as settlement of Complaint Number C2019-03 pursuant to West Virginia Code § 301322(b).

2. The Board **ORDERS** Respondent Firm to pay a civil penalty in the amount of Two Hundred Fifty Dollars ($250.00) for practicing engineering without a Certificate of Authorization.

3. The civil penalty imposed herein totaling Two Hundred Fifty Dollars ($250.00) must be paid within thirty (30) days of the date of entry set forth below, such amount to be made payable to the "W. Va. P.E. Board" for transfer to the general fund of the State of West Virginia upon receipt.

4. The sum and substance of the Complaint and this agreement in part or in their entirety shall be set forth in Board publications and on the Board's website, as well as other appropriate placements, including the non-public enforcement exchange database administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES).

5. Any violation of the terms of this Consent Order shall be immediate cause for further disciplinary action by the Board.

6. If the civil penalty imposed herein is not paid within thirty (30) days of the date of entry set forth below, then the Respondent Firm's COA is hereby **ORDERED REVOKED**. Said revoked COA may be restored once the civil penalty is paid, and the Respondent Firm pays the appropriate fees, and is otherwise in good standing with the Board. West Virginia Code § 301321(d)(1).

7. This Consent Order may be summarily enforced in the Circuit Court of Kanawha County, West Virginia, without further notice to Respondent Firm upon application by the Board for the entry of a Judgment Order for the total amount of payment agreed to herein of Two Hundred Fifty Dollars ($250.00), together with pre-judgment interest from the date of the President's signature hereon, post-judgment interest from the date of entry of the Judgment Order, and all costs of any enforcement action(s), which judgment shall be fully executable in accordance with applicable law.

8. This matter shall be closed upon execution of this Consent Order by both parties and the full payment of the civil penalty agreed to herein, except as to the provisions set forth in paragraph 6, above, regarding revocation of the Respondent Firm's COA, and its affects shall survive the closure of this Consent Order.

9. This Consent Order constitutes a full and final settlement of this matter, and nothing in this Consent Order or the circumstances giving rise to the same may be the subject of any appeal or other civil or administrative actions except an action by the Board to enforce the terms of this Consent Order. This shall not prohibit the Board from considering this disciplinary action or the circumstances giving rise to the same with regard to any future disciplinary matter involving Respondent Firm which may come before this Board.

10. This Consent Order relates solely to matters set forth in West Virginia engineering law and does not evidence compliance with any other laws of the State of West Virginia or its political subdivisions, nor should any such compliance be implied.

AGREED TO BY:

10.22.18

GRANT COURTNEY, P.E.
By: Grant S. Courtney, its Owner

DATE

ENTERED into the records of the West Virginia State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers this 31 day of October, 2018.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

By: Bhajan S. Saluja

~~**BHAJAN S. SALUJA, P.E.**~~
BOARD PRESIDENT